

Remarks

The foregoing amendment is hereby submitted for the Examiner's consideration to comply with the objections or requirement of form expressly set forth in the Office Action, and to better place the present application in condition for allowance, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(a).

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-27 and 29 are pending in the application, with 1, 11, 18, and 24 being the independent claims. Claim 28 is sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 1, 6, 11, 12, 18, 24-27, and 29 are sought to be amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action, the Examiner objects to claim 28 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Examiner indicates that this claim would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base and any intervening claims. (Paper No. 05302005, page 4). Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's conditional allowance of claim 28.

Further to the Examiner's suggestion, independent claims 1, 11, 18, and 24 have been amended to include the features from claim 28 that the Examiner has indicated as not being disclosed in the prior art. As indicated by the Examiner, these claims should be in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance thereof.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-27 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,914,724 to Deering *et al.* (herein referred to as "Deering"). (Paper No. 05302005, page 2). Although Applicants respectfully disagree, the Examiner's rejections have been rendered moot by the above amendment for at least the reasons stated above. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-27 and 29, and allowance thereof.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will

expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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